United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1107
26 March 1992

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General appeals to parties in Nagorno-Karabakh dispute to maintain informal cease-fire; urges coordination of peace efforts; briefs Security Council on mission by his Personal Envoy Cyrus Vance to that region.

+ Security Council holds consultations to discuss draft text calling for sanctions against Libya.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Eliasson to visit Bangladesh and Myanmar concerning refugees from Myanmar.

+ United Nations inspection team examines missiles destroyed by Iraq.

+ Deployment of United Nations military component in Cambodia continues; troop strength to reach 15,900 by mid-April.

+ Brigadier-General Michael Minehane appointed Force Commander of United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appealed to the parties involved in the dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh for the maintenance of the informal cease-fire which was arranged under the auspices of Iran, and which was to expire tomorrow, 27 March.

In a statement today through Spokeswoman Nadia Younes, he further appealed to all engaged in efforts towards the establishment of peace in the area, including the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), to exercise the greatest possible coordination in those efforts.

The Secretary-General expressed his gratitude to his Personal Envoy, Cyrus Vance, whom he last week sent on a fact-finding mission to the region, for his "remarkable service to the United Nations and the cause of peace". Mr. Boutros-Ghali this afternoon briefed the Council on the mission undertaken by Mr. Vance.

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The Security Council held consultations this afternoon to discuss a revised draft text co-sponsored by the United States, the United Kingdom and France calling for sanctions against Libya, including an arms and air embargo. The Council is meeting in response to failure by Libya to comply with Council resolution 731 (1992), which called for a full and effective response to requests for cooperation in establishing the responsibility for the terrorist acts against Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772.

The Secretary-General met on Monday, 23 March, with the Permanent Representative of Libya to the United Nations, Ali Ahmed Elhouderi, concerning the two Libyans accused of involvement in the downing of Pan Am flight 103 over Scotland in 1988. The Libyan Ambassador told the Secretary-General that his country would hand over the two men to the League of Arab States. Following the meeting, the Secretary-General said he had requested a "written confirmation" from Libya that it would hand over the two men as a first step in full compliance with resolution 731 (1992).

Yesterday afternoon, United States Ambassador to the United Nations Thomas R. Pickering told correspondents that it appeared that Libya was stalling the process and seemed to be engaged in a "shell game" with the Arab League. It was disappointing that the resolution was not going to be complied with after all, he said, adding that consultations on the new draft proposing a sanctions against Libya would now be speeded up.

In his comments to the press, Council President Diego Arria said the Council would meet in a formal meeting to vote on the draft text when consultations were over, most probably Friday afternoon or early next week.

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The Secretary-General has asked Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Eliasson to visit Bangladesh and Myanmar to examine humanitarian matters relating to the presence in Bangladesh of refugees from Myanmar. The visit will be at the invitation of the two Governments.

The Secretary-General Spokeswoman said Mr. Eliasson would arrive in Dhaka on Monday 30 March and would travel to Yangon on 2 April. He would be visiting the affected areas in the two countries.

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The ninth United Nations ballistic missiles inspection team today examined the remains of a significant number of ballistic missiles that had been destroyed unilaterally by Iraq.

According to a press release issued today by the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament, team members had identified parts unique to each missile as

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well as some missile guidance sets. Those activities took place at various sites to the north and south of Baghdad where, for the past four days, the Iraqi Army had been excavating the buried debris, the Commission said.

* * *

With 1,986 United Nations troops already in place, the deployment of military personnel of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) continues, and full deployment is expected to be completed by mid-May.

A Malaysian infantry battalion is expected to arrive shortly, bringing the total UNTAC military component to 2,600 persons. The battalion Commander and an advance party of 47 are already in Battambang, and will provide security to the first convoy of Cambodian refugees returning from Thailand on 30 March.

Of the forces currently in the country, the bulk is formed by the Thai engineering battalion (700 men) and the Indonesian infantry battalion (850 men). Some 1,169 UNTAC military personnel are deployed in Phnom Penh, 780 in Battambang and the remaining 36 in six other locations.

* * *

The Secretary-General today announced the appointment of Brigadier-General Michael Finbarr Minehane of Ireland as Force Commander of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). He is to succeed Major-General Clive Milner of Canada who will relinquish his post on 9 April. General Minehane is being promoted to Major-General upon appointment.

General Minehane has held a range of command and staff appointments in the service of Ireland. In 1991, he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General and appointed General Officer Commanding Southern Command.

He is a veteran of peace-keeping missions, having served with the United Nations Force in the Congo (ONUC) in 1961; with UNFICYP in 1968; and as second-in-command of an Irish battalion of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in 1979 and 1980. In 1982, he commanded the Irish battalion in UNIFIL.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1108
27 March 1992

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is distressed by reports of "serious and ongoing" human rights violations in Yugoslav conflict.

+ Special Rapporteur on Human Rights reports continuing "massive human rights violations" in Iraq.

+ Private talks between United Nations and Iraqi delegation continue in Vienna on Iraqi oil sale.

+ Appeal for information on fate of British Journalist Alec Collett, who was kidnapped in Lebanon in 1985, renewed by United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

+ Preparatory Committee for 1993 World Conference on Human Rights to begin second session on Monday, 30 March, in Geneva.

+ Women are still not elected or appointed leaders despite international legislation on equality, says new United Nations study.

+ International Atomic Energy Agency invites Governments to adopt international nuclear event scale.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sadako Ogata, has deplored reports of serious and ongoing human rights violations on both sides of the Yugoslav conflict.

In a press release at Headquarters today, Mrs. Ogata said the UNHCR was making every effort to facilitate the voluntary return of the nearly one million people forced to flee from the civil strife. Civilians -- many of them women, children and elderly -- were being compelled to abandon their homes and seek security in other areas, some by force and others by

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intimidation or threat. The Office of the High Commissioner had appealed to all parties in the conflict to refrain from any action causing new displacement of the civilian population.

Meanwhile, the Human Rights Committee, currently meeting in New York, has decided to ask Yugoslavia how the current crisis there has affected its international obligations to respect the rights recognized in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The Committee has been examining Yugoslavia's third periodic report on its compliance with the Covenant and will now ask for a specific description of the "flagrant violations of basic human rights" that have occurred during the recent military operations. Yugoslavia will also be asked to ensure that those rights are vouchsafed to "all individuals subject to its jurisdiction".

The Committee will further inquire as to what steps have already been or will be taken to investigate the violations, punish the culprits and avoid the recurrence of such acts.

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The "massive violations of human rights" which continue in Iraq are so grave that, since the Second World War, "few parallels can be found", states Max van der Stoel in his new report on the human rights situation in Iraq. A national of Belgium, Mr. van der Stoel is the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rigths.

In his report to the President of the Security Council, dated 5 March, he says the volume of accumulated evidence, much of which he has collected himself, leads to the firm conclusion that the Government of Iraq has "systematically violated and continues to violate the international human rights obligations it has undertaken". The number of victims suffering from these violations, the Rapporteur continues, is in the hundreds of thousands at least. With respect to the Kurdish minority, he adds, there is reason for special alarm because there have been human rights violations directed against Kurdish people as such.

The Rapporteur recommends that a "broad-based human rights monitoring operation" be sent to Iraq, as soon as possible, until the human rights situation has drastically improved in that country.

He urges Iraq to set up a commission of inquiry into the fate of tens of thousands of disappeared persons and to take measures to end the widespread practice of torture. He also calls for a renewal of the negotiations on a "food for oil" formula and an end to the blockade of the Kurdish-controlled area of Iraq.

* * *

A United Nations spokesman announced today that the United Nations delegation, headed by Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs

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Giandomenico Picco, and the Iraqi delegation, headed by Iraqi Permanent Representative to the United Nations Abdul Amir A. Al-Anbari, had continued their talks on Iraqi oil sale in Vienna today. Meetings would continue tomorrow, Saturday.

* * *

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has renewed its appeal for information about the fate of British journalist Alec Collett. Mr Collett was kidnapped in Lebanon while on a writing assignment for UNWRA seven years ago, on 25 March 1985.

Commissioner-General of UNRWA Ilter Turkmen said "that following the release of most of the Western hostages held in Lebanon, we hope to hear some definite news about Alec Collett in the near future".

Alec Collett was commissioned by UNRWA in 1985 to report on the situation of Palestine refugees in Lebanon. Just before the completion of his assignment, he was abducted. In April 1986, his captors claimed that he had been killed and nothing further has been heard of him, despite numerous appeals by UNRWA and the United Nations.

* * *

The Preparatory Committee for the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights will hold a second session beginning on Monday, 30 March, in Geneva. Proposals regarding the agenda, dates, and participation in the Conference will be discussed at the two-week meeting. No venue has been set for the 1993 Conference.

The high-level Conference will be convened in accordance with a General Assembly decision to review and assess the progress made in human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to identify obstacles to further progress in that area.

The Conference will also examine the relationship between development and the enjoyment by everyone of economic, social and cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights, among other things.

* * *

Despite commonly accepted International legal norms which advocate the participation of women in decision-making, women are still not elected or appointed leaders, according to a new United Nations study. Entitled: Women in Politics and Decision-Making in the Late Twentieth Century, it says that nowhere in the field of women is the gap between equality by law and by practice so wide.

The Study focuses on women's participation in formal decision-making at the national level. Through the help of the case studies and by analyzing the similarities and differences between countries, the study examines why there

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are only a few countries -- mainly those of the Nordic Group -- where the proportion of women in decision-making and thereby, their influence on public policy, is comparable with that of men.

Calling on women to put themselves forward as candidates for office, the study stresses that equality in political participation and decision-making is a priority for the 1990s, without which other areas of advancement of women would be put at risk.

* * *

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (NEA/OECD) have invited Governments to adopt a new scale for use in classifying incidents and accidents at nuclear power plants.

The scale, called the International Nuclear Event Scale (INES), went through a successful trial period in 1991. The INES scale was developed jointly by experts from IAEA and NEA/OECD to standardize the reporting of nuclear events world-wide and to facilitate communication among the nuclear community, the media and public. The scale categorizes events from level 0 for no safety significance, to level 7 for accidents with widespread health and environmental consequences. Under the scale, the Chernobyl accident was rated level 7 and the Three Mile Island accident was rated level 5.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1109
30 March 1992

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ United Nations begins repatriation of some 375,000 Cambodian refugees from Thailand; officials of United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia take part in ceremony for release of 31 prisoners of war and civilian internees.

+ Joseph Verner Reed appointed to coordinate United Nations efforts on consequences of oil well fires in Kuwait; delivers message to Kuwaiti Emir.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Public Information says awareness must be instilled that "United Nations is good value for the dollar" -- a cost-effective and humane solution to conflict and human suffering.

* * *

The United Nations repatriation programme for some 375,000 Cambodian refugees began today in Cambodia. The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, and President of the Supreme National Council, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, today greeted the first returnees arriving from Thailand at an official reception centre near the town of Sisophon.

According to a United Nations spokesman in Cambodia, the first convoy of buses and trucks carrying the refugees travelled down a route which had been upgraded and de-mined by the Royal Thai Army. After spending some days at the centre, the refugees will move on to four village settlements near the town of Sisophon. United Nations officials hope that during April, two to three convoys a week carrying between 8,500 and 10,000 refugees will leave Thailand.

The repatriation of Cambodian refugees is an essential step in the implementation of United Nations settlement plan for Cambodia. The programme is expected to be completed within a nine-month period.

Meanwhile, 31 prisoners of war and civilian detainees were released yesterday, 29 March, by the State of Cambodia in a ceremony presided over by Prince Sihanouk, with the participation of Mr. Akashi.

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A spokesman for the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) has reported that so far, some 642 prisoners of war and civilian detainees have been released by the State under the direction of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Special Representative.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has asked Joseph Verner Reed, his Special Representative for Public Affairs, to take over the duties of Margaret Joan Anstee as Special Representative to coordinate United Nations efforts to counter the consequences of oil well fires in Kuwait and the Gulf region. An announcement to this effect was made today by a spokesman for the Secretary-General.

Early last month, Ms. Anstee was been appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Angola.

In the fulfilment of his new mission, Mr. Reed left for Kuwait over the weekend and is scheduled to meet today with the Emir of Kuwait, to whom he will deliver a message from the Secretary-General.

* * *

The Committee on Information began its annual session today, hearing an introductory statement by the new United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, Eugeniusz Wyzner, who indicated how the present quest of peoples for knowledge about the United Nations might influence the design and direction of global events into the next century.

Mr. Wyzner said "we must do our best to reach into every town and village, almost to every household, to earn the trust and support so central to the formation of public consent -- the cornerstone of an effective United Nations". The awareness must be enstilled, he went on, that "the United Nations is good value for the dollar" -- a cost-effective and humane solution to conflict and human suffering.

The Under-Secretary-General noted that the Department of Public Information (DPI), which had recently undergone a major restructuring, would retain its current organizational form at present. However, the Department had been mandated by the Secretary-General to work with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on integrating a number of United Nations information centres with UNDP field offices. The Secretary-General had also decided to establish United Nations interim offices in some republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States, integrating development and information activities.

Mr Wyzner went on to say that the sharp increase in the number and scope of peace-making and peace-keeping activities had made new demands on DPI in formulating and implementing information programmes tailored to each endeavour. Information components such as educational campaigns on human rights had been designed for the United Nations Observer Mission in El

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Salvador (ONUSAL) and the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), among others.

With regard to the upcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Mr. Wyzner said DPI was already handling some 40 to 50 press quiries each day, and some 1,635 journalists had been accrediteu to the Conference thus far.

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CORRECTION: A story in Friday Highlights of 27 March misstated the nationality Max van der Stoel, Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights situation in Iraq, who is from the Netherlands, rather than Belgium.

United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1110
31 March 1992

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council votes to impose mandatory sanctions against Libya, including an air and arms embargo, effective as of 15 April; vote is ten in favour, none against, with China, Cape Verde, India, Morocco and Zimbabwe abstaining.

+ Preparatory Committee of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development approves four chapters of "Agenda 21"; reschedules Rio Conference for 3 to 14 June.

+ In letter to Security Council President, Somali Chargé d'affaires says cease-fire will be "short-lived" unless cause of conflict is removed; urges recognition of "the multitude of factions and clans" by international community in efforts to reunite Somalia.

+ Speakers in Information Committee stress importance of free, pluralistic and independent press.

* * *

The Security Council has decided to impose mandatory sanctions against Libya, including an air and arms embargo, effective as of 15 April. The Council took that action by adopting resolution 748 (1992) by a recorded vote of ten in favour, none against and five abstentions (China, Cape Verde, India, Morocco and Zimbabwe).

The action by the Council comes in response to Libya's failure to provide full and effective response to earlier requests by the Council for cooperation in establishing the responsibility for the destruction of Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772.

By its resolution, the Council has decided that all Member States, including non-members and all international organizations, should deny permission to any aircraft to take off from, land in or overfly their territory if it was going to or coming from the territory of Libya, unless the

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particular flight had been approved for significant humanitarian needs. It also prohibits the supply of any aircraft or aircraft components to Libya, as well as engineering and maintenance servicing of Libyan aircraft.

The embargo also includes any provision to Libya of arms and related material of all types, including the sale or transfer of weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment.

The resolution further calls on States to significantly reduce the number and the level of staff at Libyan diplomatic missions and consular posts and to deny entry to or expel Libyan nationals accused of being involved in terrorist activities.

The Council decided to establish a Committee to examine reports on the work done to implement the embargo and to seek information from States to that effect. The Committee is also consider any application by States for the approval of flights on grounds of significant humanitarian needs.

The Council requested all member States to report to the Secretary-General by 15 May on the measures instituted by them to meet their obligations under today's resolution.

Asked by the press following the meeting whether the "moral weight" of the resolution had been diminished by the fact that one third of the Council had abstained in the vote, Council President Diego Arria (Venezuela) replied that the Council shared common ground in its stand against terrorism, as reflected in January's unanimous resolution 731. "There are different perspectives and different interests with regard to the treatment and the consideration of this matter and that was reflected in the vote", he said.

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The Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) has recommended to the General Assembly that the dates of the Conference be changed from 1 to 12 June to 3 to 14 June. The move is being recommended in consideration of the Muslim Feast of Ed-Al-Ah, which will start around 10 June. Ozker Akad, the representative of Turkey speaking on behalf of the Islamic Conference, said the decision would facilitate greater participation in the Rio Conference thus contributing to its success.

Meanwhile, the Preparatory Committee has approved four chapters of "Agenda 21", one of the documents scheduled for adoption by the Conference, which consists of a comprehensive plan of action extending into the twenty-first century, covering major areas affecting the relationship between the environment and the economy. The chapters adopted, which still contain bracketed texts that indicate lack of agreement, particularly concerning financial resources, deal with sustainable mountain development, science for sustainable development, and national mechanisms and international cooperation for capacity-building.

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In a statement to the meeting, Preparatory Committee Chairman Tommy Koh of Singapore said the success of the Rio Conference would be called into question if it had before it large numbers of bracketed texts, and it would be lamentable to have future generations look back on the failure of the Conference due to ideological differences and the dominance of short-term interests over long-term goals. He said that contrary to rumours, the current session would not be extended beyond 3 April, and there would be no resumed session.

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Acknowledging the Secretary-General's observation that the situation in Somalia was "extraordinarily complex" and "eludes conventional solutions", Somali Chargé d'affaires Fatun Mohamed Hassan has proposed ways to ensure the effectiveness of the United Nations programme of assistance aimed at bringing the protracted crisis in that country.

In a letter to the President of the Security Council, dated 26 March, Ms. Hassan stressed that the cease-fire, humanitarian assistance and national reconciliation should be weighted equally in any effort to end the Somali crisis. She also pointed to the fragility of the cease-fire agreed on by the parties on 3 March, arguing that while it was still the "logical first step in bringing an end to the senseless loss of life in Somalia", it would be "short-lived" unless the cause of the conflict was removed.

The Somali Chargé urged the international community to recognize "the multitude of factions and clans" in her country, to ensure both fairness of representation and impartiality in all negotiating efforts to reunite Somalia. She also proposed that the technical team dispatched by the Secretary-General to Mogadiscio, under the terms of Security Council resolution 746 (1992), should not only visit that city, but several other Somali ports as well, in order to ensure the equitable distribution of humanitarian assistance to all the affected population nationwide. (23763)

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Freedom of information and the importance of a free, pluralistic and independent press was stressed this morning, as the Committee on Information began its general exchange of views. During its three-week session, which began yesterday, participants will consider United Nations public information policies and activities, as well as ongoing efforts to promote a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order.

During today's debate, speakers called for a reassessment of United Nations information centres around the world. Requests to set up new centres should not be addressed on an ad hoc basis it was felt; rather, decisions should be based on clear policy guidelines.

Speaking for the Group of Western European and other States, the representative of Ireland, Gerard Corr, said the Department of Public

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Information (DPI) should make maximum use of existing resources, which he said were sufficient. The Committee needed to consolidate its role as the body that recommends to the General Assembly the mandated activities of DPI. It was undesirable for sponsors of resolutions in the Assembly to mandate activities for DPI.

The representative of Finland, Lars Backstrom, on behalf of the five Nordic countries, stressed the relationship between communications and development and called for increased coordination between DPI and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1111
1 April 1992

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General deplores killing of staff member of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees yesterday in Ethiopia -- the second slaying of UNHCR staff in less than a month.

+ Military component of United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia currently numbers 2,789 personnel; another 4,000 expected to arrive over next three weeks.

+ Preparatory Committee for United Nations Conference on Environment and Development hears African proposal for convention on drought and desertification; adopts three new chapters of "Agenda 21".

+ New United Nations study shows that emerging international legal instruments on environment will have increasing impact on activities and operations of transnational corporations.

+ Kuwait pays $2.3 million for its projected share of expenditure of Boundary Demarcation Commission and $2 million for costs incurred with respect to return of Kuwaiti properties.

+ Preparatory Committee for 1993 World Conference on Human Rights urged to consider promotion and protection of human rights since 1948 Universal Declaration and improvements that could be made.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed deep regret over the death of Lourenco Mutaca, an international staff member serving with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), during an armed attack yesterday while he was on mission to Gode, Ethiopia.

In a statement issued through his Spokesman, the Secretary-General said the tragic event "highlights once again the dangers faced by United Nations staff members participating in humanitarian operations who risk their lives in the search for peace in strife-torn parts of the world". He urged government authorities to make every efforts to ensure the safety of such staff.

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Mr. Mutaca was the head of the UNCHR sub-office in Dire Dawa, in eastern Ethiopia, involved in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people of Ethiopia.

According to a press release issued by the UNHCR today, the 56-year-old Mozambican was attacked by four gunmen as he was entering a vehicle. Operations in the area had been suspended and most United Nations staff withdrawn pending a review of security conditions.

The UNHCR said the incident brought to 15 the number of relief workers killed in the country during the last seven months and further highlighted the personal risks taken by those trying to deliver humanitarian assistance throughout the deeply troubled Horn of Africa region.

The incident is the second slaying of UNHCR staff in less than a month. On 11 March, Tekuye Muhe, a UNHCR guard, was killed while trying to defend the Organization's Jijiga office from bandits.

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With another 4,000 military personnel expected to arrive over the next three weeks, the military component of United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) numbers currently 2,789 men, according to a UNTAC spokesman. The Force will require a strength of over 15,800 persons of all ranks to carry out its assigned tasks.

To date, over 1,100 UNTAC military personnel were deployed in Phnom Penh; over 1,500 in Battambang and the remaining 152 in six other locations.

The UNTAC spokesman further reported that the deployment of the military component would take place progressively, starting with the early deployment of essential engineer units to continue and expand the mine programme and to undertake rehabilitation of infrastructure, followed by the arrival of units to establish a firm logistic base for UNTAC. This process would culminate in the deployment of almost all the remaining military personnel one week prior to the start of the second phase of the cease-fire.

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An appeal has been made to the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), now meeting at Headquarters, for emergency measures to address the worst droughts ever, currently afflicting the whole southern African sub-region.

Addressing the Committee yesterday, H.M. Murerwa, Minister for Environment and Tourism of Zimbabwe, urged all delegations, especially those from the developed countries, to support the African proposal for a convention on drought and desertification. He also supported the inclusion in "Agenda 21" of measures to increase the understanding of the impact of climate change.

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During the meeting, the Committee also adopted three new chapters of "Agenda 21" -- a comprehensive plan of action extending into the twenty-first century proposed for adoption by the Earth Summit in Rio. The Chapters relate to human settlements; education, public awareness and training; and information for decision-making. The Committee also adopted a chapter on environmentally sound management of solid wastes.

Other chapters adopted by the Preparatory Committee concern the relationship between the environment and the economy, sustainable mountain development, and science for sustainable development. The Committee has also recommended to the General Assembly that the Rio Conference be moved from 1 to 12 June to 3 to 14 June in consideration of the Muslim Feast of Ed-El-Ah.

The Preparatory Committee winds up its month-long session on Friday, 3 April.

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According to a new study just released by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Development, emerging international legal instruments on environment will have increasing impact on the activities and operations of transnational corporations. The report surveys recent developments in environmental law and policy at the international and regional levels.

The study concludes that activity in that area, although uneven, has produced instruments increasingly detailed in their specificity and standards which are more stringent in their effect. It notes that the "trend is indicated by the highly developed, comprehensive and detailed rules of European Community environmental law, which grew out of a trade and economic treaty".

The study points out that although developments in global and regional environmental law have not yet led to the widespread adoption by developed and developing countries of internationally harmonized minimum standards, the trend towards integration of environmental concerns into mainstream international economic and trade law and policy may ultimately point to that result.

The study seeks to provide the necessary information and assist transnational corporations and international organizations in fulfilling legal and ethical obligations with respect to the wide range of existing and emerging environmental instruments and policies.

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The Kuwaiti Permanent representative to the United Nations, Mohammad A. Abulhassan, has given the Secretary-General two checks from the State of Kuwait, according to Spokesman Francois Giuliani. One check, for $2,313,000, represents Kuwait's projected share of the expenditure incurred for the work

of the Boundary Demarcation Commission through the end of June this year. The second check, for $2 million, covers projected expenditures incurred with respect to return of Kuwaiti properties.

The Boundary Demarcation Commission, set up by the Security Council's cease-fire resolution to end the Persian Gulf war, will meet in New York from 8 to 16 April to review results of surveying and mapping recently carried out, as well as to address actual demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq.

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In Geneva on Monday, 30 March, the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, Antoine Blanca, told the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights that every day, more and more appeals were being made to the United Nations to encourage and promote human rights. Mr. Blanca, who is the Secretary-General of the Conference, said the event would serve as a major forum to ensure that human rights would be better respected in the future.

According to Mr. Blanca, the Conference would take place in a larger context of a revitalized United Nations. He suggested that the Preparatory Committee focus on three or four major questions, such as the promotion and protection of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration; improvements that could be made; the issue of development and its relationship to human rights; and recommendations for the future, focusing on the place of human rights within the United Nations system and on procedures, mechanisms and resources.

The Committee is continuing preparations for the World Conference in accordance with goals set out under General Assembly resolutions. Under one such resolution, the Assembly decided to convene the high-level Conference to review and assess the progress made in human rights since the 1948 adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to identify obstacles to further progress in that area.

Among the questions to be considered during the current session will be the agenda, dates and venue, rules of procedure, documentation and participation in the Conference. The meeting concludes on 10 April.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1112
2 April 1992

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council strongly condenms attacks against Venezuelan Embassy in Tripoli and demands that Libya pay full compensation to Venezuelan Government; Secretary-General decides to send Vladimir Petrovski as his Special Envoy to Tripoli.

+ Secretary-General deplores yesterday's violent clashes in southern Gaza Strip town of Rafa and nearby refugee camp, resulting in killing and wounding of several Palestinians.

+ Secretary-General's Special Representative in Cambodia submits draft electoral law to the Supreme National Council; United Nations Development Programme launches major road reconstruction efforts in Cambodia to accommodate repatriation operation.

+ Committee on Information continues debate of proposals to integrate United Nations information centres with offices of United Nations Development Programme.

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The Security Council today strongly condemned the violent attacks on and the destruction of the premises of the Embassy of Venezuela in Tripoli that took place earlier today and has demanded that Libya pay the Venezuelan Government immediate and full compensation for the damage caused.

At a formal meeting, called by Venezuela, the President of the Council, Simbarashe Simbanenduku Mumbengegwi (Zimbabwe) read out a statement on behalf of Council members in which the Council said the seriousness of the situation was underlined by the fact that the intolerable and extremely grave events had been directed not only against the Government of Venezuela but also in reaction to a Security Council resolution (748 [1992]). The statement said any suggestion that those acts of violence were not directed against the Government of Venezuela but against Tuesday's resolution was "extremely serious and totally unacceptable".

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The Council demanded that Libya take all necessary measures to honour its legal obligations to ensure the safety of international personnel and to protect the property of all diplomatic and consular premises in Libya from acts of violence and terrorism.

This morning, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali called in Libya's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Ali Ahmed Elhouderi, to protest the attacks against the Venezuelan Embassy.

The Libyan Ambassador presented his Government's apologies to the United Nations for "this deplorable incident". He confirmed that he had extended similar apologies to the Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations. The Ambassador informed the Secretary-General that the Libyan Government had appealed for restraint and for the safeguarding of the security of foreign embassies and their staff.

The Secretary-General said he trusted that all measures would be taken by the Libyan Government to ensure the safety and security of foreign embassies and their personnel, of United Nations staff currently serving in Libya and of all foreigners residing in that country.

Meanwhile, Mr. Boutros-Ghali has decided to send Vladimir Petrovski as his Special Envoy to Libya in an effort to continue to seek the cooperation of the Libyan Government to provide a full and effective response to the Security Council's resolution 731 (1991).

The Secretary-General said that the incidents which occurred in Tripoli reinforced the importance of such a mission.

* * *

The Secretary-General has issued a statement deploring yesterday's violent clashes in the southern Gaza Strip town of Rafa and the nearby refugee camp which resulted in the death and wounding of several Palestinians. He said the incidents were yet another tragic illustration of the dangers inherent in the "long, drawn out Palestinian-Israeli conflict".

The Secretary-General appealed for an end to the bloodshed and expressed the hope that the present tensions would not escalate into further violence. At a time when negotiations aimed at achieving a comprehensive settlement of the Arab/Israeli conflict were underway, this tragic situation could only serve to hamper that process.

* * *

The Secretary-General's Special Representative in Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, has submitted a draft electoral law to the Supreme National Council (SNC) -- the legitimate body and source of authority in Cambodia. The members of the Council will examine the draft and offer their comments at their next meeting.

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During his meeting with the SNC in mid-March, the Special Representative stressed that free elections scheduled for spring 1993 would mark the beginning of a new era. He stressed that the Cambodians themselves must be responsible for the ultimate success of the elections by actively participating in the democratic process.

During the meeting, the parties agreed that the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) would provide a direct line of communication between the factions and the Force, effective as of 1 April. The first phase affords hand-held radios operating among SNC members, the Special Representative and the UNTAC Force Commander in Phnom Penh. Later phases are to add telephone and mobile phone service to this hot-line.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has designed and launched a massive emergency road rehabilitation plan in Cambodia to rebuild the main arteries for transporting the 370,000 Cambodian refugees returning from border camps in Thailand.

With the impending heavy rains in August and the expected arrival of tens of thousands of bus loads of returning refugees from Thailand over the next year, road construction crews are racing against time.

The Government of Sweden has pledged $5 million to UNDP for the immediate rehabilitation of roads which are marred by mud and mines. UNDP will be contracting the UNTAC Thai Battaillion for the rehabilitation of a 70-kilometre strech which runs from Sisophon to Battambang. The total programme is expected to cost $15 million.

* * *

The Committee on Information today continued its exchange of views discussing proposals to integrate United Nations information centres with offices of UNDP and issues relating to the role of international media organizations.

Speakers generally supported a reappraisal of the centres, but asked for more information about financing, criteria for integration with UNDP and the status of individual centres. Some speakers urged that centres be maintained as independent entities and others suggested that the financing needed to establish new centres could be obtained by economizing in other areas.

Speakers also expressed the view that even while information technologies had advanced, an information gap still existed between developed and developing countries. One representative expressed the view that news of interest to developing countries was often ignored by international media conglomerates.

During its debate, the Committee has focussed on activities of United Nations information centres and criteria for their establishment. The representative of Portugal, speaking on behalf of the European Community, said the establishment of new centres should be based on a coherent global assessment of their role and location. The Committee should pay particular attention to the efficiency of existing centres, and to communication with local information and educational institutions and non-governmental organizations.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1113
3 April 1992

F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

+ Secretary-General embarks this weekend on three-week trip, including visits to Switzerland, China, Cambodia, Thailand and India; to chair meeting of Administrative Committee on Coordination in Geneva on Monday, 6 April.

+ Secretary-General discusses Middle East situation with Israeli Permanent Representative.

+ Cambodian Supreme National Council issues statement reaffirming refugees' right to return.

+ Fact-finding mission of United Nations international drug control programme to visit seven countries of Commonwealth of Independent States.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali embarks on a three-week trip this weekend to Switzerland, China, Cambodia, Thailand and India.

He will arrive in Geneva on Monday, 6 April, where he will chair the meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). During his stay in Switzerland, Mr. Boutros-Ghali will receive briefings by a number of his top aides on different topics. Among them are his Special Envoy to Libya, Vladimir Petrovsky; his Special Representative on Bangladesh and Myanmar and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Eliasson; his Personal Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Benon Sevan; and Under-Secretary-General James O. C. Jonah on the question of Somalia.

On Monday, 13 April, the Secretary-General will pay an official visit to Berne.

Starting his Asian trip, the Secretary-General will pay an official visit to China beginning on 14 April. In Beijing, he will also open the forty-eighth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

On 17 April, the Secretary-General is scheduled to travel to Cambodia to review the United Nations operation in that country -- the United Nations

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For information media—not an official record

Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). He will also meet with Prince Samdech Norodom Sihanouk and members of the Supreme National Council.

On 20 April, the Secretary-General will fly to Bangkok for an official visit to Thailand.

The Secretary-General will conclude his Asian trip with an official visit to India, where he will remain until 23 April.

* * *

The Secretary-General met today with the Israeli Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Yoram Aridor. The situation in the Middle East and the peace conference were discussed among other things. Mr. Boutros-Ghali also raised with the Ambassador his concerns at the degradation of the situation in Gaza where four Palestinians were reported killed and several wounded by Israeli security forces on Wednesday, 1 April.

According to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the incident produced one of the heaviest tolls of Palestinian casualties since December 1987.

* * *

The Supreme National Council of Cambodia -- the legitimate body and source of authority in that country -- confirmed today in a statement that all Cambodian refugees and displaced persons who return home would not be subject to persecution on account of their departure from Cambodia, or their status as refugees or displaced persons.

This was one of the conditions specified in the Paris Agreements signed last October by all four factions in the Cambodian conflict.

The statement went on to express the members' particular satisfaction with the successful commencement of the operation for the repatriation of Cambodians in exile and reaffirmed "the cardinal principle of free choice of final destination inside Cambodia".

The statement was issued as an outcome of a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 1 April, in which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, and the President of the Council, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, participated.

* * *

A special fact-finding mission of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme began yesterday, 2 April, a month-long visit today to seven countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States -- Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The four-member mission, which is headed by Enrique Parejo Gonzalez, former Minister of Justice of Colombia, will be evaluating the extent of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in those countries.

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The mission is being sent in response to reports of an alarming increases in crime and drug abuse in the republics of the former Soviet Union. It will discuss data collection, prevention measures and treatment with the concerned authorities. The mission will examine measures needed to interdict illicit narcotics cultivation, curb drug trafficking and reinforce control over precursors and essential chemicals used in the manufacture of illicit drugs. Discussions will also focus on ways and means of strengthening the capability of police and customs services.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1114
6 April 1992

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council to consider request by Iraqi Foreign Minister Ahmad Hussein for "immediate and appropriate measures" in response to recent air aggression by Iran.

+ Security Council condemns acts of violence in Rafah and urges Israel to abide by 1949 Geneva Convention; Council members also express grave concern over continued deterioration of situation in Gaza strip.

+ Preparatory Committee for United Nations Conference on Environment and Development ends fourth session at headquarters; adopts draft principles of Rio Earth Summit Declaration.

+ Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Libya, Vladimir Petrovsky, will leave Rome tomorrow for Tripoli where he is scheduled to meet on Wednesday with Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Al-Qathafi.

+ Responding to the "particularly precarious" food situation in Afghanistan, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali appeals to international community to urgently provide 30,000 metric tonnes of food for 1 million Afghans.

+ Human Rights Committee praises Government of Colombia for efforts to comply with the International Civil and Political Rights; urges Government to put an end to impunity -- a central element in the insecurity and terror afflicting many Colombians.

* * *

The Security Council is expected to consider a request by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Ahmad Hussein, for "immediate and appropriate measures" in response to recent air aggression by Iran, during its consultations today.

In a letter to the President of the Council, Simbarashe Simbanenduku Mumbengegwi (Zimbabwe), dated 5 April, the Iraqi Foreign Minister protested four air attacks by the Iranian Air Force inside Iraq, calling them "an act of

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plain and unjustified aggression". In the letter, Mr. Hussein also warned Iran of the serious consequences of such acts and said Iraq reserved the right to respond.

The Iraqi Air Force was now conducting patrols to protect its air space from the possibility of a recurrence of the Iranian attacks, according to the Foreign Minister's letter.

* * *

The Security Council has condemned the acts of violence at Rafah in the Gaza Strip and urged maximum restraint in order to bring the violence to an end. It urged Israel to abide by the 1949 Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in time of war and to act in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

In a statement read out by Council President Simbarashe Simbanenduku Mumbengegwi (Zimbabwe) on behalf of Council members early Saturday morning, 4 April, the Council also requested the Secretary-General, in accordance with Council resolution 681 (1990), to use his good offices regarding the situation concerning Palestinian civilians under Israeli occupation. By that resolution, adopted on 20 December 1990, the Council requested the Secretary-General to monitor and observe the situation of Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories and to keep the Security Council regularly informed.

Also Saturday morning, Council members expressed grave concern over the "continued deterioration of the situation in the Gaza Strip ... in which several Palestinians have been killed and many more injured". The Council further expressed concern that "any escalation of violence would have serious implications for the peace process".

* * *

A set of 27 draft principles that could become the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development was approved early Saturday morning, as the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) concluded its fourth and final session.

The text, proposed by the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, Tommy Koh of Singapore, is the only "clean" text -- free of brackets -- that the Committee is sending to the Rio Conference for further consideration and finalization.

At its last meeting, the Committee approved 11 chapters of "Agenda 21" -- a comprehensive plan of action extending into the twenty-first century -- which covers major areas affecting the relationship between the environment and the economy. It also adopted elements for two other chapters. The subjects covered concern protection of the oceans and coastal areas and rational use of their living resources; strengthening the role of major groups, corresponding to nine chapters of Agenda 21; and combating

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deforestation. The two texts containing elements for chapters concern international institutional arrangements and legal instruments and mechanisms.

In a concluding statement, the Secretary-General of the Conference, Maurice Strong, said, "we must not allow this planet and its people to remain in brackets". And Committee Chairman Tommy Koh, of Singapore, apologized in his concluding remarks for not having achieved more, and added that he looked forward to greater success at the Rio Conference.

* * *

The Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Libya, Vladimir Petrovsky, who left New York over the weekend for Rome, will leave that city tomorrow for Tripoli where he is scheduled to meet on Wednesday with Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Al-Qathafi.

Mr. Petrovsky is scheduled to leave Tripoli Thursday night for Geneva where he will brief Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali on Friday, 10 April.

* * *

Calling attention to the food situation in Afghanistan which he described as "particularly precarious", Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appealed to the international community for some 30,000 metric tonnes of food to feed some one million people in that country.

In a statement made public today, the Secretary-General stressed that there was a need to act quickly to avoid further tragic humanitarian situation and its political repercussions at this time, when after 13 years of strife, Afghanistan was "moving towards a political settlement".

The severe food shortage has affected the entire country, but is particularly serious in Kabul and its immediate surrounding areas. Mr. Boutros-Ghali pointed out that there was a danger the situation might deteriorate further, causing widespread human suffering and malnutrition and resulting in increased numbers of displaced persons and new flows of refugees, "adding to the millions who have already sought refuge in neighbouring countries".

He also called on all parties concerned to fully cooperate in ensuring the safe transportation of food items to the needy, which will be distributed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Afghanistan.

* * *

The Human Rights Committee has praised the Government of Colombia for many of its efforts to comply with the International Civil and Political Rights. At the same time, the Government has been urged to put an end to impunity -- a central element in the insecurity and terror afflicting many Colombians.

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In its concluding observations of Colombia's third periodic report, the Committee expressed concern over the absence of investigations of sometimes grave crimes, the failure of the judicial system to function with real effect and the inability of the civilian Government to take appropriate action to end the situation.

Earlier, representatives of Colombia told the Committee that although there was still a "high level of social violence" in their country, violence against journalists, trade unionists and teachers had declined considerably, as had reports of torture, disappearances and mass murders. They said the Colombian Government had established a number of human rights institutions which followed up on complaints of violations, dealt with acts of violence against families and children, negotiated with guerrilla groups and investigated cases of murder or torture involving the police or military.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1115
7 April 1992

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council authorizes full deployment of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia; adopts unanimously Secretary-General's report recommending $26 million net reduction in financing of Force; appeals to parties concerned in Bosnia-Herzegovina to seek cease-fire and negotiated political solution.

+ Security Council asks United Nations offices in Baghdad and Tehran to investigate Sunday's Iranian Air attack over Iraq and to report back to the Council.

+ Lack of progress on Cyprus question makes it "unlikely" that United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus will be maintained on present scale, according to report by Secretary-General.

+ Secretary-General, on week-long visit to Geneva, meets two African Heads of State concerning situation in Liberia; opens current session of Economic Commission for Europe.

+ Anti-Apartheid Committee says European Community decision to lift oil embargo against South Africa contravenes United Nations resolutions.

+ Concern about minorities' rights, raised in Human rights Committee as it takes up report of Belgium.

* * *

The Security Council today authorized the full deployment of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) and adopted the Secretary-General's report on a revised budget and deployment plan for the Force, in which he recommends a $26 million net reduction of the estimated expenses of the Force.

By its unanimous resolution, the Council urged all parties and others concerned to take all action necessary to ensure complete freedom of aerial movement for UNPROFOR and called upon all parties "not to resort to violence", particularly in any area where UNPROFOR was to be based or deployed. The

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Council also appealed to all concerned in Bosnia-Herzegovina to cooperate with the efforts of the European Economic Community (EEC) to bring about a cease-fire and a negotiated political solution.

By its resolution 743 of 21 February, the Council invited the Secretary-General to submit a first report on the establishment of the Force within two months of its adoption.

In his report to the Council, dated 2 April, the Secretary-General urgently requested that the Council authorize the full deployment of UNPROFOR as soon as possible, pointing to the fragility of the cease-fire. According to the report, the new financial statement stands at just over $607 million, 4.1 per cent lower than the preliminary estimate of $633.6 million.

Yesterday, Spokeswoman Nadia Younes told correspondents that due to the increasing tensions in Bosnia-Herzegovina reported by UNPROFOR Force Commander Satish Nambiar, the Secretary-General had asked him to look into the possibility of advancing the deployment of the military observers in the border areas between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.
(S/23777), (S/23788)

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The Security Council has asked the United Nations offices in Baghdad and Tehran to begin investigations of Sunday's air attack by the Iranian Air Force over Iraq, and to report, as soon as possible, to the Council to avoid any further escalation of the situation.

According to a statement issued by the Spokesman's Office today, the Council has been deliberating over the events, following representations made to the Council by both Iraq and Iran. The statement said members of the Council viewed the incident with great concern particularly because of the sensitivity of the region. The Council called upon all the parties concerned to desist from all acts of violence in conformity with its resolution 598 (1987) which called for a cease-fire and which, a year later, became the framework for the cease-fire agreement between Iran and Iraq.

Following Sunday's incident, Iraq protested the Iranian attacks calling them "an act of plain and unjustified aggression" in violation of the 1988 cease-fire agreement between the two countries. Iraqi Foreign Minister Ahmad Hussein asked, in a letter to the Council President, for "immediate and appropriate measures" by the Security Council.

Meanwhile, Iran has said that its air attack over Iraq was a "necessary and proportionate measure" in self-defence in response to an "armed and organized terrorist" operation against the Iranian villages of Beshkan and Bayani, in which four civilians were reported killed and seven wounded.

In a letter addressed to the Council President and the Secretary-General, dated 5 April, the Iranian Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Kamal Kharrazi, said the same "terrorist group" had previously carried out

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similar attacks from Iraqi territory against Iranian border civilian centres. The Government of Iran did not "seek any hostility with Iraq" and had already reiterated to Iraq its respect for that country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, while reserving its right to take action in self-defence.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has concluded that "it is unlikely that the United Nations will be able for much longer to maintain peace-keeping presence in Cyprus, at any rate, on the present scale". He has pledged to undertake another determined effort to achieve a settlement, but has stressed that "if that effort does not succeed, consideration would have to be given to an alternative course of action in dealing with the Cyprus question".

The Secretary-General's conclusions were based on what he called "lack of progress" in his mission of good offices in Cyprus and the uncertainties expressed by three of the four main troop-contributing Governments about their roles in the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)

In his report to the Security Council on Cyprus, dated 3 April, Mr. Boutros-Ghali expressed serious concern that despite repeated efforts to solve the situation in Cyprus, there had been "no progress" and in certain areas there had even been regression. Referring to the "very unsatisfactory" financing arrangements, the Secretary-General said he was of the view that, at a time of greatly increased demand for peace-keeping, a critical look had to be taken at long-lived operations, such as UNFICYP and the peace-making process it supports. He made the point that "if a Force has, for 28 years, maintained conditions in which peaceful settlement to a dispute can be negotiated but negotiations have not succeeded, it has to be asked whether that Force has a priority claim on the scarce resources that member States can make available to the Organization's peace-keeping activities".

* * *

Following talks this morning with two African Heads of State, the Secretary-General today opened the forty-seventh session of the Economic Commission for Europe at the Palais de Nations, as part of his week-long visit to the Swiss capital.

In his opening statement, the Secretary-General noted that the Commission with its long experience in East/West cooperation was one of the United Nations agencies most deeply involved in the transition in Eastern Europe and he stressed that this was the time for a "sober appreciation" of the grave problems facing Central and Eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union. To that end, the Executive Heads of the United Nations system would take up this week, under his chairmanship, the question of the transition process concerning those States, and the implications for the United Nations system.

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During his meeting with the two African Presidents, Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire and Abdou Diouf of Senegal, the Secretary-General congratulated the two leaders on their efforts to secure peace in Liberia. A Geneva-based United Nations press officer reported today that the two were leaders in Geneva for a meeting of the Ad Hoc Commission of the Western African States on Liberia and were coordinating talks with the parties to the conflict in that country.

A United Nations spokesman told correspondents today that other subjects covered in the talks were on the situation in Somalia and the next Summit of the Organization of African Unity, (OAU) to be held in Dakar, Senegal in June.

In Geneva this evening, Mr. Boutros-Ghali will chair a meeting of United Nations agency chiefs. So far he has met with the Heads of four United Nations humanitarian and environmental agencies and was scheduled to meet with officials of several other organizations later this evening.

* * *

The acting Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Jayaraj Acharya (Nepal), today expressed concern on behalf of the Committee about yesterday's decision of the Council of Ministers of the European Community at Luxembourg, to lift the oil embargo imposed by the Community against South Africa in September 1985.

In his statement, Mr. Acharya said the Special Committee considered such acts as extremely serious since they went against General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and would undermine the negotiations to bring about a peaceful end to apartheid by eroding the leverage that the international community had so effectively used to help advance the political process in South Africa.

While the Special Committee considered the political changes in South Africa, including the outcome of the all-white referendum, as significant impetus to move the negotiations forward, the process towards a non-racial democracy was, however, not yet irreversible, Mr. Acharya said.

* * *

Foreigners could be excluded from residing in certain Belgian communes because a concentration of them could promote racist reactions, the representative of Belgium told the Human Rights Committee this morning as it began its consideration of that country's report on its efforts to implement the International Convention Civil and Political Rights.

Claude Debrulle, Administrative Director at the Ministry of Justice of Belgium, explained that the King was authorized to forbid certain categories of foreigners -- with the exception of nationals from the European Economic Community (EEC) countries -- from residing or taking up residence in a given commune if the population increase there would jeopardize the public interest.

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Experts from the Committee asked for more details on the limitations placed on foreigners and on the rights of minorities within the two majority Communities. They also raised questions about the direct applicability of the Covenant in Belgian law and about women's equality and prostitution.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1116
8 April 1992

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General, in Geneva for meeting of Administrative Committee on Coordination, is "relieved" to learn that Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yassir Arafat is "safe and sound" following his plane crash yesterday.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Vladimir Petrovsky to report to Secretary-General on recent meeting with Libyan Leader in Tripoli.

+ Drug situation termed "extremely serious" by Executive Director of United Nations Drug Control Programme, as Commission on Narcotic Drugs opens thirty-fifth session in Vienna.

+ Information Committee stresses need to address technological imbalances between poor and industrial countries in information field.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who has been kept informed about the search for the airplane of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yassir Arafat, said today he was relieved to learn that Mr. Arafat had been found "safe and sound". Mr. Arafat's plane crashed yesterday in the Libyan desert.

According to a statement issued today in Geneva, the Secretary-General was spending part of the day at the World Health Organization's offices to preside over the work of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). Today's meeting dealt with role of the United Nations during the next decade and on contributions to be made by specialized agencies, individually and collectively.

Last night, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Coordinator for Emergency Assistance Jan Eliasson reported to the

(more)

For information media--not an official record

Secretary-General on his latest mission to Bangladesh and Myanmar. Mr. Eliasson was sent to the two countries on 30 March to examine humanitarian matters relating to refugees fleeing into Bangladesh from Myanmar.

* * *

The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Vladimir Petrovsky, met yesterday in Tripoli with Libyan head of state Colonel Muammar El-Qaddafi.

Mr. Petrovsky was sent to Tripoli last week by the Secretary-General to seek the cooperation of Libya in complying with Security Council resolution 731 (1992), which asked Libya to cooperate in establishing responsibility for the downing of Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772.

In a press communiqué issued yesterday, Under-Secretary-General Petrovsky said he and his delegation had had a two-hour "serious and frank" meeting with the Libyan leader, and that he would report the results to the Secretary-General in Geneva today.

He said the United Nations had been assured by the Libyan authorities that the question of the attack on foreign embassies was considered closed and no repetition of such incidents would take place. Regarding exit visas for foreign nationals working in Libya, the United Nations had had also been assured that this question was solved and the Libyan authorities would not prevent any foreigners from leaving the country.

On 31 March, the Security Council voted to impose an air and arms embargo against Libya by 15 April, unless the country provided full and effective response to its request for cooperation.

* * *

The Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, Giorgio Giacomelli, has warned that the world could lose the war against illicit drug abuse and trafficking. Speaking to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on Monday in Vienna as it opened its thirty-fifth session, Mr. Giacomelli said the situation had become "extremely serious" and called on States to show real, consistent and lasting will in a concerted effort tc win the fight against drugs.

Reporting on the Programme's first year of operation and its future plans, Mr. Giacomelli said that its strategy would be developed in complete transparency. He stressed the importance of sharing responsibilities in the fight against drug abuse, saying the Programme must not be made a scapegoat of the drug problem. While the United Nations would not shirk its responsibilities on the issue, he said, it was time for society at large to take its share of responsibility for the problem. He pointed out that the Programme needed independence to "to make sure that it does not become the hapless victim of sterile and dangerous confrontations between States or continents".

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Also at Monday's session, the newly expanded Commission elected Eugenio Anguiano Roch of Mexico as its Chairman. Membership, up from 40, now stands at 53 in response to the growing complexity of the Commission's role as the policy-making organ of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

* * *

The need to address technological imbalances between developed and developing countries in the information field was stressed this morning by speakers participating in the Committee on Information's general debate.

Matters discussed included the need for an new world information and communication order to address information imbalances, cooperation between the Department of Public Information (DPI) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the fundamental importance of freedom of information and expression.

Several speakers again expressed concern about the plan to merge a number of United Nations information centres with field offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). They said the cost-saving measures should not be carried out at the expense of information centres in the developing countries.

Among the speakers, the representative of the Russian Federation, Aleksandr V. Denisov, said DPI was dealing successfully with the increased demands placed upon it. However, he said, it was the Commitee's responsibility to keep from overburdening DPI with too many tasks. Any effort to try to satisfy everyone would reduce the effectiveness of the information provided.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1117
9 April 1992

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Cambodian Supreme National Council is expected to accede to two basic international human rights covenants on 20 April when Secretary-General visits that country.

+ Administrative Committee on Coordination in Geneva, presided over by Secretary-General, discusses transition period of Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States and consequences for United Nations system.

+ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says "response has not been encouraging" to appeal for $27.5 million to aid 150,000 refugees fleeing into Bangladesh from Myanmar.

+ Experts urge Human Rights Committee to consider Yugoslavia's report only on interim basis in view of recent events.

+ Commission on Transnational Corporations resumes eighteenth session at Headquarters to examine role of transnationals in changing world economy.

* * *

The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, announced today in Phnom Penh that members of the Supreme National Council -- the sole legitimate authority in that country -- have agreed to sign the instruments of accession to the two basic international human rights covenants on 20 April.

The two Covenants -- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights -- will be signed during a meeting between the Supreme National Council and the Secretary-General when he visits Cambodia.

In a statement issued at Headquarters today, Mr. Akashi said the signature would be an "important concrete demonstration" of Cambodia's commitment to respect and safeguard the basic rights of all its citizens and would provide a framework in Cambodian law within which Cambodians would

undertake activities for the protection and promotion of their rights and freedoms.

According to the statement, the human rights component of the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) had established a basic mechanism and procedure for immediately investigating alleged serious violations of human rights of Cambodians. Following an investigation, it said, the UNTAC Director of Human Rights would recommend to the Special Representative any corrective or other action which he believed should be taken as a result of the outcome of the investigation.

* * *

In separate news today, Security Council President Simbarashe Simbanenduku Mumbengegwi (Zimbabwe) told correspondents this afternoon that the Council would probably vote on a draft resolution on Cyprus tomorrow following consultations on that subject.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was presiding over the work of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) today in Geneva.

According to a press communiqué issued in Geneva, today's agenda included discussion of the consequences for the United Nations system of the transition period in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States as well as the preparations for the Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), scheduled to take place in Rio de Janeiro in June.

Before today's session, the Secretary-General met with UNCED Secretary-General Maurice Strong and with Mr. Boutros-Ghali's Envoy to Libya, Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Petrovsky, who gave him a preliminary report on his recent mission to Tripoli.

This evening, the Secretary-General was scheduled to meet with Youssef Debri, Special Adviser to Colonel Muammar Qaddafi, and again with Mr. Petrovsky.

* * *

According to a report from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) today, more than 191,000 refugees have arrived in Bangladesh as of 1 April.

The UNHCR has appealed to donors for $27.5 million to aid 150,000 refugees. Although it has received contributions from four States and the European Community, the Agency said that so far the response had not been encouraging. The Agency said it was unlikely that the crisis would be rapidly resolved and pointed out that the Government of Myanmar has denied accusations of persecution and has maintained that the refugees are illegal immigrants.

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The Secretary-General met yesterday in Geneva with Jan Eliasson, Coordinator for Emergency Assistance and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, who has just returned from a mission to Bangladesh and Myanmar.

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With one day left of its forty-fourth session held in New York, several experts have urged the Human Rights Committee to consider Yugoslavia's third periodic report only on an interim basis, saying human rights in that country have been overshadowed by recent events.

Discussion yesterday centred on the right to self-determination of the peoples of Yugoslavia and on reported human rights violations being carried out by the Federal army in the name of restoring constitutional authority. Several experts said the Federal Government should be subject to higher standards of observance of the Covenant than the break-away republics, and called for the exercise of greater control over the troops.

In introducing his country's report, the adviser to the Federal Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia, Miodrag Mitic, said the circumstances under which the report was being delivered were extraordinary. It was a time when the basic human rights of the citizens of Yugoslavia were being seriously threatened.

In spite of the Yugoslavian history of one-party rule, the development of human rights had been impressive under recent constitutional reform, he said, adding that the constitutional system in the past two years had undergone fundamental change and had come closer to international standards. An end to the one-party monopoly and the promotion of freedom of expression and political activity was part of that reform.

The 18-member Committee of experts is charged with examining States parties' reports describing their compliance with the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

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Transnational corporations, more than ever before, were key players on the world economic scene as they were a major source of capital and technology -- important determinants of economic growth. Samuel B. Assante of the Department of Economic and Social Development expressed that view yesterday, as the eighteenth session of the United Nations Commission on Transnationals resumed at United Nations Headquarters.

According to reports before the Commission, transnationals are central to the development process, especially with regard to technology transfer, which is facilitated through increased foreign investment and the supply of capital goods to developing countries. On that issue, speakers yesterday stressed the importance of transparency in the activities of the transnationals and in national foreign investment policies.

(more)

The representative of Colombia, Maria Francisca Arias, said developing countries had created favourable conditions for foreign investment and argued transnational must facilitate the transfer of new technology to those countries with due regard for environmental concerns. Germany's representative, Dietrich Kurth, stressed that the dissemination of technology was not a simple process. In his view, technology, in the form of hardware and managerial skills, was best disseminated at the international level on the basis of market-oriented economies by means of intensive foreign trade, growing company cooperation and direct investment.

The Commission will continue its discussions until April 15, during which time it will also examine transnational as agents and beneficiaries of a number of changes, including the increasing globalization of trade and privatization of industry, and the regional concentration of the world economy around the United States, Western Europe and Japan. It will also take up the role of sanctions against South Africa.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1118
10 April 1992

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council decides to remain involved in Cyprus question and asks Secretary-General to keep it informed of efforts to reach agreement.

+ Agreement to establish impartial pre-transitional council in Afghanistan, as soon as possible, announced by Secretary-General; agreement also reached to hold international conference under United Nations auspices to end civil war in that country.

+ Secretary-General comments on developments concerning Afghanistan, Libya, Western Sahara, among other issues, during Geneva press conference.

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The Security Council this afternoon decided to remain involved in the Cyprus question "on an ongoing and direct basis" and called on the Secretary-General to keep the Council informed of his efforts to promote the achievements of an overall framework agreement and report by July.

The Council took that action by its unanimous adoption of resolution 750 (1992), which endorsed a set of ideas containing elements of a fair solution as outlined in the Secretary-General's report. It said those ideas would be an appropriate basis for reaching agreement, subject to the work to be done on such outstanding issues as territorial adjustments and displaced persons.

The set of ideas, which emerged from talks in 1991 between representatives of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities and the Greek and Turkish Governments, incorporates the understanding that Cyprus is the common home of the two communities, each a federated state. The text states, among other things, that the solution must respect the cultural, religious, social and linguistic identity of each community.

By today's decision, the Council called on the parties concerned to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in clarifying without delay the outstanding issues and to hold a high-level international meeting to conclude an overall framework agreement.

(more)

In his report to the Council dated 3 April, the Secretary-General warned that "lack of progress" by the two sides in concluding an agreement on Cyprus, and the increasing dissatisfaction of the troop-contributing Governments of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) "make it unlikely that the United Nations will be able for much longer to maintain a peace-keeping presence" in the island on the present scale.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali announced today that agreement in principle had been reached, with the Afghan parties and governments involved to establish a pre-transitional council in Afghanistan composed of impartial personalities to which all powers and all executive authority would be transferred.

During a week-long visit to Geneva, the Secretary-General issued a statement saying an Afghan gathering would be organized as early as possible for the purpose of working out the arrangements for the transition period and an interim mechanism, leading to the establishment of a Government in Kabul through free and fair elections. Immediately after the formation of the interim government, the council would transfer all powers and executive authority to that body.

According to the statement, an understanding had been reached that once the council assumed power in Kabul, there would be a cessation of hostilities, a declaration of general amnesty to all concerned, guarantees of safety and security for all Afghans, respect of human rights, protection of property, and an opening of all major routes for commercial traffic, particularly for humanitarian commodities.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali stressed that with the cooperation of all Governments, the Afghan people would be able to establish an elected Government, thus bringing peace to the war-torn country. He added that the process would also encourage the more than five million refugees to return to Afghanistan.

The Secretary-General's Personal Representative in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Benon Sevan, has been holding intensive consultations with all segments of the Afghan people, including political leaders, mujahideen commanders and religious leaders based inside Afghanistan, as well as Afghans currently residing outside the region.

On 18 March, Afghan President Najibullah agreed that once an understanding was reached through the United Nations for the establishment of an interim government in Kabul, all powers and all executive authority would be transferred to that government.

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The Secretary-General today expressed satisfaction that his proposal for convening an Afghan gathering had received the support of the vast majority of the Afghans consulted.

(more)

Speaking at a press conference in Geneva this morning, Mr. Boutros-Ghali also announced that the former Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Francis Blanchard, would prepare a position paper for the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) on a "new approach to reinforce the cooperation among the different agencies".

The Secretary-General disclosed that he had been in contact with the representatives of the Libyan Government and would meet with them later today. The topics discussed, he said, included proposals to deliver the two Libyans accused of the downing of Pam Am flight 103 to the Security Council through the League of Arab States. The United Nations would hand them over to a neutral country. He added that the International Court of Justice would make its ruling by 14 April -- a day before the deadline set by the Security Council for the arms and air embargo against Libya.

In response to correspondents' questions, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said he had received a report from Jan Eliasson, his Special Coordinator on Humanitarian Assistance, who had recently returned from a mission to Bangladesh and Myanmar. During his visits to Yangon and Dhaka, the Coordinator had reached an agreement for the repatriation of the more than 200,000 refugees who had sought sanctuary in Bangladesh.

Regarding the question of Western Sahara, the Secretary-General said his newly appointed Special Representative for that region, Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan, would travel on a mission to Morocco in the coming weeks for meetings with representatives of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro (POLISARIO).

The Secretary-General was scheduled to meet today with the Foreign Minister of Bosnia-Herzegovina; the Foreign Minister of Libya; Carlos Alzamora, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Compensation Commission, and Ilter Turkmen, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Mr. Boutros-Ghali will travel to Berne on Monday, 13 April, before leaving Switzerland for China on 14 April.

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